

Serial No.: 09/927,190
Examiner: Steven Blount

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 8-15 remain in this application.

Claims 8-15 have been rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over the applicants' "admitted prior art" in view of US Patent 4,817,082 to Orsic. The Examiner has interpreted Applicants' statement of the problem (page 2, line 18) that they solved with the invention, as a statement that the art had recognized there was a problem to be solved. The Examiner is requested to reconsider that the application goes no further than to give Applicants' statement of the problem solved.

Claim 8 has been amended to emphasize that each of the "crossbars" recited therein switch from one of multiple ports to another. There are not multiple ones of such crossbars in Orsic. Each of the "crosspoint elements" such as 107-21 is a simple one input-to-one output switch, which is activated or not. Please see column 3, lines 64-66 of Orsic. The whole crossbar network 110 of Orsic might be comparable to one of the crossbars of the present application. It is submitted that there is nothing in the Orsic reference to teach the present solution to applicants' stated problem or to suggest the claimed invention.

Claim 8 has also been amended to recite the relationship of the numbers of the various interconnections that enable applicants to increase the number of external ports in the claimed assembly beyond the number of ports of an individual crossbar. The Examiner has cited Yokoi et al. (US 6,880,046) in connection with other claims, calling attention to Fig. 5 of the reference. Yokoi has components called "crossbar modules", which do some routing of signals, but appear very different from the Ethernet switches of the present invention. Fig. 5 shows an interconnection of four of these crossbar modules XB to reach more system modules SB. However, Yokoi does not teach the presently claimed interconnection of Ethernet switches to provide more ports than available in one Ethernet crossbar switch. Moreover, the application in Yokoi is so different from the problem addressed by inventors, that it is submitted the Yokoi teachings do not suggest or make obvious the presently claimed solution, if those teachings are viewed without any hindsight and knowledge of applicants' invention.

135862
Page 4

Serial No.: 09/927,190
Examiner: Steven Blount

Since amended claim 8 and claims 9-15, dependent thereon, are submitted to be unobvious in view of the cited prior art references, it is requested that they be allowed.

It is believed that the foregoing amendment places the Application in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner have any further comments or suggestions, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner contact the undersigned to expeditiously resolve any outstanding issues.

Respectfully submitted,

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135862
Page 5